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## GOLF SWINGS

By the Brothers, Frank Thompson, present Canadian Amateur champion, and W. J. Thompson, Ontario Amateur champion and last year's champion of Canada. They are native-born and resident Canadians, members of a family of five famous golfing brothers.

### NUMBER TEN

The reader who has followed these articles so far may discover what looks to be an apparent conflict between two methods. Attention has been focused on the great, and almost paramount importance of the hands, while in earlier articles the reader's attention was directed to the fact that the swing was apparently started by body movement and that the hands were the very last points to start moving.

Are these methods mutually exclusive, or may they exist together in harmony? And if so from the practical golfer's standpoint which one should receive the golfer's attention, for it seems impossible to have two ideas of things occupying the golfer's attention if effective golf is to follow. Unless the camera lies terribly there does not seem to be any reason for doubting its accuracy of the golf swing, the pictures show clearly that the body movement commences the up swing, and the body movement also initiates the down swing.

The point of strain in the upswing is noticeable at the wrist joints. This is, in all probability, the reason for the erroneous teaching that the wrists commenced the swing, for it is forgivable to mistake strain for movement. Likewise in the down swing, strain is first felt in the wrist joints and here again one might easily conclude that the swing was commenced by the wrists. At any rate this was taught by many instructors although, perhaps not recently.

Admitting the fact that the camera shows clearly that the body movement is first apparent, are we justified in concluding that the hands are inactive at these stages? This would be an unwarranted assumption. The hands are busily engaged holding the club up to its work. The inertia of the club must be overcome, and when one remembers that the club weighs some 14 ounces, and is 40 odd inches from the hands, together with the weight of the arms, the work required of the hands and arms is not inconsiderable. In practical golf the points to emphasize seems to be the hands.

The movements of the body employed in golf resembles very closely those used in hitting a baseball. No baseball batter is concerned unduly about pivoting, twisting the shoulders, and other innumerable refinements which worry the ardent golfer. The batter watches the ball and attempts to strike it. He is conscious of doing this with the hands. The same thing is true of the hockey player. He is conscious of shooting the puck with the hands.

Suppose now that the hockey player in shooting were to think of moving his shoulders, or the batter were to think of pulling back the left shoulder, I fancy the results would be inaccuracy in both instances. The same thing is true of golf. The game is difficult enough in itself without creating difficulties. Striking an object the size of a golf ball some 70 inches away on a surface two inches long by slightly over an inch in depth, from all sorts of lies and positions, is not the simplest task that can be devised, notwithstanding the opinion of spectators.

Even hitting the ball requires some skill without directing its flight. The beginner at tennis has a simpler task. The inherent difficulties of golf are apparent. Add to these difficulties created fictions and the game becomes intolerable. The way to lower ones handicap is to think only of the ball and slinging the club head through it with the hands. All other thoughts become a handicap. This is well illustrated in an anecdote credited to Braid. As the story goes a member returned to Walton Heath after a long absence. As Braid had often played him before, a game was arranged. The same handicap of old, being one third, was agreed upon when the member volunteered the remark that he should do well as he had just read Braid's book, whereupon Braid agreed to increase his handicap to one half. The story ends here, although one may be sure Braid won.

The moral is plain, golf is primarily a muscular effort and thinking how it is done while doing it complicates the problem.

The whole crux of the matter is speeding the club head through the ball. This can never be accomplished if the hands are allowed to become inactive, and they will become so unless they are continually kept at work. Learn to think only of the ball, and several inches ahead of it, and throw the club head through it. This is the important section of the swing. If this is right nothing else matters. The rest of the swing may be correct, and this all wrong. A good beginning is not so important as a good finish.

If the swing is admittedly wrong how should one proceed? Concentrate on the admitted weak points, or improve the swing, generally as a whole. Unfortunately man is so constituted that he may think of one point only at a time. Focus on the left knee and the hands lag. Think of the up swing and the down swing

suffers. Golfers are continually worrying about the back swing, watching and fretting about it as if the club should go back in a certain groove. There are groove golfers, but they are artificial ones, and unless they have continual practice their games fall away quickly. Natural swings are bound by no law. Mitchell and Duncan have easy natural swings and are quite different from Sarazen or Diegel. The chances are that Mitchell's back swing varies considerably both in length and path—but the forward swing is practically the same through the ball on a straight line to the hole.

At the present time it is reported of Sarazen that he does not intend taking part in the British open because his game suffered a slump, and he is working on a system to restore it. He is called a groove player, and this type of golfer needs more practice and the playing of the game takes more out of such a player. The natural golfer would never think of working on some new system, for he has only one method of playing the game.

Nearly every good golfer ruins his game some time or other for a while, by trying to develop a system. This usually happens after he has become a champion. Evans experienced this and so did Sarazen. Diegel is beginning to falter and Jones was flirting with trouble shortly after he won the open. Fortunately he abandoned his ideas before they affected his game. Diegel is supposed to have discovered a new way of hitting the ball. May be it is new for him, but outside of straight adaptations caused by the new ball the golf swing is the same to-day as it was three hundred years ago.

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### DISTRICT BASEBALL FOR NEXT WEEK OR TWO

The following are the baseball matches scheduled in the District League series for the next week or two:—

- Saturday, July 4th—Iroquois Falls at Timmins.
- Wednesday, July 8—Timmins at Iroquois Falls.
- Wednesday, July 15th—Iroquois Falls at Timmins.
- Saturday, July 18th—Timmins at Iroquois Falls.

### SOFT BALL SCHEDULE FOR NEXT WEEK OR TWO

Interest continues keen in the District Soft Ball games. The following are the games to be played in the next week or two:—

- July 3rd—Dome Tripods at A.S.D. Club.
- July 6th—Dome Athletics at Hollinger.
- July 10th—Schumacher at Dome Athletics.
- July 10th—Hollinger at Schumacher
- July 13th—Hollinger at Dome Tripods.
- July 17th—Schumacher at South Porcupine.

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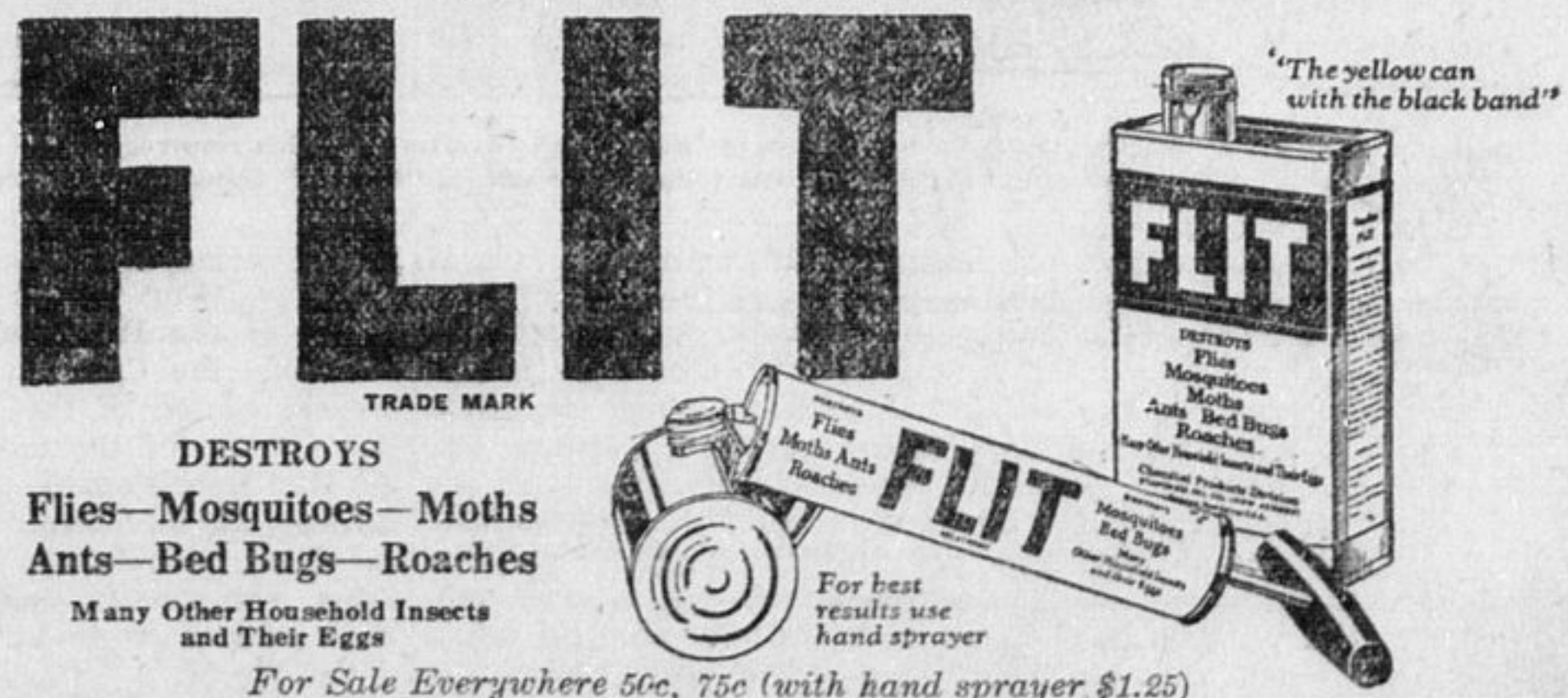
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